

Transport of live fish: Revision of Council Regulation (EC) 1/2005

Background

The movement of live fish is integral to the business of finfish farming throughout Europe. The majority of finfish species that are raised in European aquaculture are moved at least once during their life while some are moved several times; this can be on or off farm.

A wide variety of fish transport systems are used in Europe, primarily on land and sea, reflecting the diverse nature of the European aquaculture industry.

As well as being a legal responsibility and ethical consideration, maintaining the welfare of fish in transport is an essential element in the economic performance of aquaculture businesses.

The Council Regulation (EC) 1/2005 that entered into force in 2007 is the actual relevant EU Legislation applying to the 'Welfare of Animals during Transport' and has been transposed into national legislation throughout Europe. Manuals for the transport of fish already exist in Germany¹, Scotland², Italy³, ... and are the results of common agreements between National authorities and stakeholders. They are obviously linked to local needs and fish species.

In May 2020, the European Commission announced the revision of the aforementioned Regulation in the framework of the EU Farm to Fork Strategy. In that perspective, the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP) wishes to address some considerations regarding the transport of finfish.

Recommendations

Considering that:

- The transport of fish is not (at least partially) comparable to that of land animals;
- Farmed fish belong to different species with different ethological characteristics and with different transport methods and therefore there cannot be a single type of approach;
- Farmers and other aquaculture operators have acquired considerable experience in relation to transport and it is also important to consider the practical aspects developed as well as scientific or behavioural issues;

¹ https://www.lfl.bayern.de/mam/cms07/publikationen/daten/informationen/praktische-rechtliche-aspekte-transport-lebende-fische_lfl-information.pdf

² <http://thecodeofgoodpractice.co.uk/>

³ http://www.salute.gov.it/imgs/C_17_pubblicazioni_2848_allegato.pdf